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593 events of a common life build up very complete adaptations and very close emotional bonds among all those who share the life together. The bonds must be compatible; adjustment is made all round, again through gradual habituation. Otherwise conflict is ready to set off young against old, men against women, persons against one another. There is reciprocity of obligation and expectancy.

But the point of interest here is that it is the bonds that must be dealt with for understanding, not anything within them or the activities associated with them. Here there is an absolute coincidence of "social" and "economic" factors within single relationships. In the case of a small farmer and his son, there is only one relationship; to separate their social from their economic activities is meaningless. They are one in fact, and, as far as the peasants are concerned, they are one in name.

593 ● 554 Thus any of the words designating status in the relationship, such as father, son, owner, employee, heir, etc., might well be used, but in actual practice the first two of them are sufficient to cover all the activities of the relationship. Only the statuses of father and son are distinguished by the country people. These words are the only designations of status that are to be heard among them. All others are unnecessary. They are not part of the experience of the small farmers except as they become so when the outside world breaks in. Consequently, terms designating status are not to be understood or interpreted on a basis of *a priori* or philological meaning, but as references to the events in connection with which they were used.

593 Thus when it comes to understanding the force of such terms for the small farmers who use them, we are able to see why it is that the terms are emotional symbols of very great power. They are part of the peasant's own experience in the very relations we have been discussing, and they make definite and reinforce the relations for him. They cannot

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(mother-in-law and daughter-in-law like cat and mouse together).

Similar terms are used for brother- and sister-in-law. But in both languages the tendency is again to use purely descriptive phrases analogous to those we found in designating blood kindred. Thus "my wife's brother" and "my wife's mother," etc., are much more often heard among the farmers, both in English and in Irish.

The Irish language, however, has a separate term for son-in-law. It is *cliamhan*, which is related to the word *cleamhnas*. It is the only nondescriptive term in general use, for daughter-in-law is rendered as "son's wife" (*bean mhic*) in Irish. It may be that the singling out of this relative among those united to one by affinity reflects the greater importance put upon males in a patrilineal system.

The relatives by affinity just described include all those of the spouse's immediate family. The principle at work has been to coalesce ego's immediate or restricted kindred with his wife's. Beyond this group to whom the extension of the kinship behaviors is primary lies the total group of the wife's extended kindred. They are referred to as "my wife's friends"; there is a general tendency to extend kinship behavior to them; and they lie within the prohibited group. They are what might be expressed as potential kindred in the same sense that ego's third, fourth, and fifth cousins, their progenitors and descendants, are potential kindred. Should the need arise, the common descent may be remembered. At times of family crises, particularly at funerals, this sort of bond comes into active force.

In this fact lies the peculiar character of a kinship system based upon extension rather than rigidity of form. The demarcations between the kindred groups of one individual and the next are not rigidly drawn. The individual can expand and contract the group outward from the restricted family to which he belongs. If he is important in the com-

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612 554 602 munity, he can command the respect and the services of a great number of kindred; it becomes an advantage to the peripheral relatives to establish the reciprocals of behavior which the system allows. On the other hand, if the individual is without personal importance, the scope of his actual integration through behavior to his kindred may be narrowed down to include only members of his immediate family.

612 602 It is the potentiality of extension and contraction within the kinship group which is both praised and condemned in such phrases as "A neighbor is nearer than a friend" and "The higher the man, the more people he has." If the individual attempts to rise above his fellows or to forget them in his way upward, the cry immediately rises that he is "forgetting his friends." In fact, disloyalty to one's kinship group is felt to be a deadly crime against the group.

596 612 The Irish extended family, combining in different degrees of intensity of solidarity all descendants of a common ancestor through five contemporaneous generations, is not a rigidly defined structure set off from the other groups of society. On the contrary, the extended families present a picture of a series of interlocking pyramids in which each individual is assigned a definite place, but in which no two individuals (unless siblings) occupy quite the same place. It is a group of kindred reckoning common bilateral descent, and linking as equals all individuals occupying the same step within that descent to the number of five such steps, and including the corresponding group of the spouse's [614] kindred. It is in no sense a clan or gens, as its bounds are not constant, but descend and ascend through the total group of possible kindred. That is, an existing group resolves itself into a number of new ones, as descent proceeds from father to son. It is because of this that farmers having the same patronym and living side by side yet may not be "friends."

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are not used but are inalienably associated with the family. 583
This is a new development. In Carleton's day, before the famine, a daughter was often dowered with goods as well. Today this is not the case, for the goods like the land are part of an indivisible and corporate whole.

In this way, when we remember that the farm is identified in popular thinking with the patrilineal and patronymic family line of the landowner and that the girl is an outsider brought into that group, the money appears as a payment for the girl's inclusion. There is significantly no corresponding recompense or payment to the girl's father. He loses both daughter and dowry. The identification of his family, both immediate and ancestral, with the family farm is undisturbed. Of course the father of the girl makes sure that his prestige does not suffer. He demands that the farm she enters shall at least equal the dowry. The size of the dowry 554
he gives his daughter is a very strong index of that prestige. It is both a duty and a great source of pride to provide well for her.

A further indication of the nature of the movement of 583
the dowry is to be found in the terminological (formal) 602
structure of the family which we have already described. It will be remembered that there was no integration between the boy's father and the girl's, and that relationship by affinity proceeded only from the point of view of the young couple. The two fathers-in-law or mothers-in-law are not felt to be related. No kinship terms express the new connection between them. Clearly, then, we have two patrilineal groups still unmerged, still distinct. That this is the case 578
can be seen in Carleton's [1] descriptions of faction fights in 583
which two families are often pitched against one another in 602
spite of their alliance by marriage. The authors have seen some of them, not on the scale of faction fights, it is true,

[1] William Carleton, peasant novelist (1794–1869), principally *Tales and Sketches* (Dublin: J. Duffy, 1845) and *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* (10th complete ed.; London: W. Tegg, 1864).

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578 561 and forms of activity as their own and find much more interest in them than in those of the other group. The young men greet the suggestion that they should take their place in the gathering of old men in something of the tone of derision which they reserve for women. But the rivalry in their sentiments between respect and egocentric feeling, like the controls imposed by their parents to keep them respectfully silent in the presence of their elders, imposes a silence upon them. Consequently, one cannot find among them the voluble expression of attitudes based upon one's belonging to a certain relative age. One must look for it rather in particular expressions of annoyance, boredom, and chafing against restraint.

Expressions of sentiment about age are the products of a system of values upon it in which the individual makes the valuation from the place he occupies. They express not only a grouping of individuals of similar age but a mutuality between groups so composed. And, too, they form a scaffolding of categorization in which each person takes his relative place.

561 554 551 888 Let us examine one instance at least of this categorization. The community in rural Ireland bestows many names and titles. They are ephemeral. They have no currency outside the immediate circle of life in the townland or village. At best, they spread through a parish. They are nicknames and express no more than the individual's particular place in the hearts of his fellows. Yet some of them are generic epithets. Like "old" and "young," they may prefix a name and designate the more closely the personality of the person named. Like "boy" and "old fellow," they may express broad categories of a man's age and its associated behavior, and may designate not so much a biologic or physiognomic reality as a sociological status. The words "saint" and *cailleach* are of the last kind of epithet, in rural usage. In the brogue they refer only to the old. In strict philology

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both are metaphorical, for the brogue knows and makes use of the words in their "proper" meanings. *Cailleach*, the Gaelic word, means properly "hag" or "witch." "Saint," of course, is the canonized saint of the church.

The small farmer who refers to this or that contemporary and neighbor as a "saint" or a *cailleach* is making a social and moral categorization. He is not concerned with purity of diction. The old man or woman, who follows a behavior proper to his or her status and is an ornament to the community, is a "saint." The old man or woman who does not is the object of distrust and dislike. His or her departures from accepted conduct cause disturbance and strife in the community. Accordingly, he or she is a *cailleach*. Thus, in one North Clare community a "stranger" whom the community disliked was a *cailleach*, despite the feminine gender of the word. Likewise, the old man who lived in harmony with his son upon a farm already transferred, a leader in the village whose oldest hale inhabitant he was, could be described by a neighbor as follows:

> The old man is a typical Irishman. He is a saint and there isn't a thought against anyone in him. He is always in a good humor and, if he went to town to have a drink, he could stand in the one place till he dropped. He is as gentle and harmless as a child, and it will be a great loss to the village when he is gone. He and Roche [a neighbor] are two level-headed farmers and they have met every sort of trouble. If you are in doubt about any farm advice, you can go to them and they will give you as good advice as you can get, because both of them have been successful farmers. It would pay a young man to listen to them.

"Saintliness" of this kind is a matter of one's filling one's role. But it is one's role for the village that counts. There is nothing individual in the canon of conduct. The young person who follows ardently the conventions laid down for him is not a "saint" even if he is exceedingly chaste and religious. It is the word "holy," not "saint," which comes

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561 to the countryman's lips in describing him. Nor is a young
● 554 person a *cailleach*, for, like "saint," the term applies only to
551 the old. Both terms refer to sociological age rather than
888 chronological age, for those old people who occupy the role of "old" only because they have been forced into that position within the farm family can also be "saints." Thus the elder sister described in the discussion of farm marriage, who occupied the west room and the hob by the fire, was known in the neighborhood as a "saint."

Relative age makes a difference in status in the local community. It fits one into a definite place in a scheme of values. And lastly, as in the description of "saint," it equips one with a definite role in communal life which one can fill well or ill.

561 The conduct that reflects this state of affairs thrusts itself
554 into the observer's view again and again in rural Ireland
888 wherever he meets countrymen of different ages together. The relations between young and old in the community, like those between parent and child within the family, are understandable in the light of the roles of such broad age groups in terms of status.

First, there is the matter of privilege and precedence. To an outsider there may seem little enough in the countryman's way of life to allow for such distinctions. But from within, that little looms much greater. The old fellow, the men of full status who head farms and farm-working corporations of sons – those who have turned or are about to turn over their control to a younger generation – are accorded a very real precedence. In their own houses we have seen it to be very great. In the community at large it is little less so. A farmer visiting another takes his place at the hearth seat. His sons lag behind and occupy the back of the room. When the community gathers in the wake house to honor the dead, the places by the fire go to the older men and women. The boys and girls must group themselves behind. They come forward only when called upon. At

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country "stations" [5] the elder men and women file in for confession and come forward for Communion first. On the road to the shop, to church, or to the fair, the young man must keep pace and the elder may call him to his side.

The relation shows itself best perhaps in the constant discussions that are the breath of life for the countryman. No work is too pressing to prevent the countryman from "stopping on the road to pass the time of day." In the rural community such personal communion is an indispensable bridge across the social and physical space separating farm from farm. In all such discussion it is the elder men who may regulate length and subject of conversation. When groups form in pubs, in one another's houses on evening visits, before and after mass in the churchyard, the enthralling game of presenting argument, choosing sides, directing the flow of talk, belongs to the older men. The young men must listen in. At such times the important news of the countryside disseminates itself. Political judgments are formed, and the ephemeral decisions of daily life are made. In all this the boys are silent listeners. It is a bold young man who enters an opinion of his own.

Second, there is the matter of the contacts of the community with the outside world. The elder men, these same father-owners; represent the interests of the community before priest, schoolmaster, merchant, cattleman, and government official. The younger men hang back, ready to be brought in when the elders want them, listening in and keeping their own counsel. Much of this we have already indicated, but it is necessary to cite it here again in order to round out the picture.

The relation extends to very small matters indeed. The better cup of tea, the bigger piece of bread, the glass of

[5] In country districts remote from the parish church masses are said in the private houses of parishioners once or twice a year in order to allow the performance of Easter or Christmas duty by those confined to their homes through age or sickness or other cause. These are "country stations," important religious events in every townland.

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561 554 888 276 whiskey, the two eggs instead of one, the pipeful of tobacco, go to the elder men. This last, tobacco, is no small matter where even now tobacco is still expensive enough to require careful husbanding. It is a custom in the country districts to pass the pipe around among one's intimates and guests for testing, for praise, and to the accompaniment of formulae still often magical in nature. But the pipe does not go to the young man. He must content himself with an occasional "fag." When there is little, the young man can go without.

For illustration there is the anecdote that one Clare farmer tells:

> During the time when tobacco was scarce [the war], an old man came into Sullivan's [shop] and asked for a half-quarter [cut of tobacco]. The Missus told him to go [get it] where he always bought it. He was very cast down. After he was out the door, I said to her she should give him some tobacco because a man who is used to it all his life would miss it greatly if he can't get it. "Let the young bucks go," said I; "they don't want it. But an old fellow wants it badly." She looked at me and says, "Frank, are you serious?" "I am, faith," says I; "call the old man back." He was just a few paces down the road. She did and his face lighted up and he couldn't thank her enough.

561 554 888 Informal as these differences are, they are nevertheless powerful agents in the regulation of conduct among the small farmers. Without them, the flavor of country life is lost. Without them, too, one can gain no understanding of the never-varying annual round of social activity in the country districts nor any inkling of the importance of those informal activities of social intercourse which fill the non-working lives of the countrymen. It is here that social patterns of behavior upon age difference assume importance as controls of human activity. It is here that the roles the age grades play in the organization of the community reveal themselves most clearly.

THE OLD IN THE COMMUNITY

ner of the prize can count himself a proud man, for to be known in the countryside as a "great gambler" is a coveted mark of shrewdness and skill.

The older men seldom attend the gambles. They are the province of the young. For the latter, they are a crystallization of the more informal card playing, such as that at Roche's house, already described, and they give the successful young men a prestige in the community ordinarily denied them. For in late years tournaments have sprung up covering whole sections of the county and it is a proud team which can bring back a five or ten pound district prize to its home community.

From the standpoint of an enumeration of those taking part in the gambles, too, the gambles show themselves to be such a crystallization. They bring into association on more definite occasions the groups, such as that at Roche's house, which meet habitually. They unite most of the young men, especially the more active among them, with a few of the older. But it is from the young men's world of habit that their union is created.

In Rynamona the young men who gathered nightly at Roche's house were the mainstays of the gambles. They could be counted upon to attend all of them. They played well and long, as they had learned the games among themselves. But they were not the only ones to come. Most of the slightly older men of what we shall call the intermediate *cuaird*, to be described later, such as John Quin, the newcomer to the old men's house already named, came from time to time, and there was always a sprinkling of young men, kinsfolk, and "friends" from near-by communities. It was only the members of the old men's house who stayed away. They alone had given up the habits of young men. To them the gamble was "codology."

Thus the first point of difference between the visiting habits of the old men and the young men, their lack of cen-

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contests, and playful roles of solemn occasions, such as acting as strawboys (mummers) at weddings. But all these activities, in which the old members of the community do not directly participate, are alike in their playing no great part in organizing other elements in the community than the young people themselves. They serve other functions.

All these activities bind the young men, the young people, together in common interests. They provide them with a scope of action in which they are comparatively free, yet which keeps them divorced from the seats of a power over community life which is denied them. In this sphere they may develop complex norms, valuations, and conducts.

But such developments do not serve primarily to knit the community as a whole the more firmly. They are associated with the lesser prestige of the young people. Consequently, the old men's house comes to have in contrast a double function. It unites the old men in much the same way as the gamble and the dance unite the young men, in fact even more strongly. But it does so in terms of the old men's common position as recipients of the respect of the community and in terms of their individual positions as integrators of their families. The difference is structural. The activities of young men unite them across family and clique lines even from one community to the next. But those of the old men do more; they unite young and old as well. The integration of the young men is a looser and less inclusive one, even though the numbers ephemerally joined in gamble and dance may be greater.

In such a system of integrations, that of the old men has the greater prestige. A great gambler or a great dancer wins wide respect. But the distinction is short-lived. It is a nine days' or a nine years' wonder. It bestows great prestige among one's fellows, but it removes one very little, if at all, from one's subordinate, less valued place as "boy" in the community.

Where such is the case, the individual's progression

182 554 621 888 through rural life under normal circumstances is not toward a greater and greater prominence in the activities of the young men's group. Rather, there comes a time when one must break away altogether. One faces perforce a new orientation of sentiment and a new kind of behavior. Growing old brings many more changes than the physiological.

888 573 885 554 The case of the newcomer, John Quin, already described, shows the necessary changes. In Rynamona it is brought out very clearly in the clique to which he first belonged and to which we have referred at various times, calling it once the "intermediate."

[551] The clique we name so met at the house of one Joseph McMahon, more commonly known as Oscair (the Hercules of Irish saga) for his physical strength. Oscair was a rural carpenter with only a very small plot of garden and his house. But he was a good singer, a jokester, and a repository of folk tale, though he was not much past forty. He lived just at the edge of the slope leading from Kilnaboy Commons down to Rynamona. The townland was what would be called in urban sociology an "interstitial area." It was higher, rougher, and more craggy than Rynamona and Kilnaboy, lying between them. Its inhabitants were descendants of people evicted from round about who had squatted there. Most of them were "died out and left," and the place was always poor. It acted as a sort of outlying fringe of Rynamona.

The men who collected round Oscair's fire were aged thirty-five to sixty. Just as their ages were intermediate between fully old and fully young, so was their habit here. They very seldom played cards. Talk was the order of the day, enlivened by Oscair's humor and ballads. A few of them spoke of the affairs of the village with some weight. The rest did not. Those who came were as follows:

a. Young Mackey, from the village, the man recently married, still too young for the old men's house.

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b. Moroney, the sixty-year-old, "strongest" (richest) farmer of the village. One of the few who spoke with weight.
c. Young Roche, son of the very old man, still unmarried but entirely in charge of the farm he would soon inherit.
d. O'Sullivan, a herdsman, from near-by, who was a stranger in the community but had won himself a place, despite his being a landless man of sixty-five, by acting as the local veterinarian. He spoke, too, with weight.
e. John Quin, already described, who spoke here with weight.
f. Two forty-year-old Pilkington brothers, unmarried, from the Commons, very small farmers, most often silent.
g. Oscair himself, whose role was to entertain.

Of these men it can be seen that only Mackey, Moroney, and John Quin could make the transition to full farm-owning, farm-father status of old men. Mackey had years to pass before he could so do. His eldest child was very young and he himself not long in possession of his farm. John Quin, in a somewhat anomalous position, could and did move onward. In doing so, as we described, he felt it necessary to break away completely from this group. This he did, with the result that the group, itself never stable, fell to pieces. Moroney, as we remember, had a disagreement with the villagers and would not attend the old men's gatherings.

What was it then that brought these men together? The authors could get no answer from the men themselves, other than their amusement with Oscair and, in Moroney's case, a guardedly phrased dislike of the villagers. Yet, through observation and interview in the community, it became clear that they were all passing through a similar transition. Oscair's visitors were not a stable clique, nor too faithful in attendance. Both young Roche and young Mackey were still going occasionally to the young men's meeting at the other Roche's house, but both felt too great responsibilities for gambling and cards. John Quin gambled heartily enough

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but was more and more impatient with the "playboys" of young fellows. Old Moroney was gruff and lonely. The others were neighbors of Oscair's and, being poor or landless men, felt awkward going elsewhere. O'Sullivan could visit as he pleased, for, as the local "vet," his word carried weight, but, always a stranger in sentiment, he felt most at home here.

The intermediate clique was a product of similarity of interests, in contrast to the interests of other better organized groups. Its members were in some way or another a little different from the ordinary old or young of Rynamona. Some of them were remote topographically, but not all. Some were without full community status, but not all, and some of a transitional age.

Oscair's house was thus a sort of catchall for those whose position in Rynamona was not clearly defined. It was intermediate between the clearly defined groups, and for the small farmers, such as Mackey, R[illegible] and Quin, was a halfway stage in their advance from the status of young men to that of old.

The progression of which this is the halfway stage is an upward one, metaphorically speaking. It leads no longer to a greater role as "playboy" but toward full family and community status. It leads to a new behavior and new personal desires, more highly valued. One's discarded status and one's discarded behavior fall away into lesser esteem. In terms of this progression we can understand the attitude of the old men on the behavior of the young ones. It is a transitory, impermanent, unimportant thing. It is a "codology." "When they grow older," one old man said, "and become married, they will meet just as we do."

What shows itself in Oscair's clique is a transitional state. For a moment were gathered here those who could move upward, like John Quin. Gradually, they could attain full status. Oscair's hearth for them was a roadside resting place.

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With these intermediates were gathered the representatives of another anomalous social place. Both Oscair and O'Sullivan, the "vet," were important figures in the community. Their occupations and their skills won them respect and admiration over the countryside. O'Sullivan, the older man, was free to come and go wherever he might wish. But both were "landless" men. They could never attain full peasant status. In the identifications of Irish familism, they were condemned to celibacy. Neither could feel comfortable in the old men's *cuaird*. There was no place for them except, as Oscair's behavior showed, as playboys and entertainers. So they too must occupy an interstice in the structural alignments of rural social life.

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That was the way with the girl who married Willie Meaney[1] and he thought to get the money, but the parents said let her go. Now they are in Ennis and she never got anything. The same way with the two who married the Shaughnessy girls. They thought they would get something but they didn't get a thing. Would you believe that? America is not the only place where things like that happen. The people have crosses to bear. Every year we have a talk from the priest about the dances. He says the dances are all right but it is the going home that is bad. There is always a laugh when he says that. Then some of the parents get worried and they won't let their daughters go to a dance for a month or so, and they forget about it after that.

The status of boy and girl involves a "repression" of sexual impulse, virginity, and chastity of thought and expression, but custom and the attitudes of the older people provide a constant stimulation of sexual interest in the direction of the familistic system. The status of boy and girl thus involves a definite kind of sexual organization, based directly upon social relationships.

Nowhere is this better to be seen than in the case of the young woman's "character." Here the Church fathers and the country people seem to have attained quite a unanimity. Sexual orientation is inseparable from social role. Sexual repute and status are identical. The authors do not say this identification is unique. They do not know its historical origins. But they do wish to point out its function in this setting: The young woman's "character" is her full status as a social being because the familistic system is such that sexual activity, no less than economic, is completely integrated with one's role in social life. Consequently her sexual conduct is no concern of hers alone.

In the relationships in family and community in which the young girls of the countryside find their roles, any departure from the norm of conduct on their part is cause for

[1] Names of persons and smaller places in this and subsequent quotations are, of course, fictitious and refer to no actual persons or places of such names.

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violent disturbance in the relations uniting others to themselves and to one another. To "destroy a girl's character" in the countryside is to upset the pattern of family and community life by overthrowing the possibility of an orderly change in farm succession. Much more than a shooting or a fight, a sexual irregularity, which cannot be righted in a match, is capable of destroying the intricate mutual obligations and expectancies of rural familism.

For the family whose "name" is "destroyed" and whose hopes of orderly re-formation are upset, two courses are open. One is to patch up a compromise, to accept the match forced upon them. The other is to expel the offenders bodily. Community feeling gives full support. In either case the girl concerned can no longer hope for full status. If the match is made or another husband found to father a child, time may right matters and give her full adult status as a farm wife and mother. Her failure as a girl may be forgotten, but it was a failure still. Otherwise there is little further to do but suffer expulsion. Emigration has been the refuge till recently.

The country people's attitudes toward illegitimacy and premarital intercourse, one and the same to them, reflect well the disturbances they occasion. In discussing a local case, one woman could voice the community's opinion in the following general terms:

> A young lady with a good fortune even, she couldn't get any man because her character is broken. Unless maybe he is very low. And so she usually goes to America and passes for a maiden. Everyone knows the father of the child but, if he has a good farm of land, no one would say anything, but he would be unlucky and have no family. He would get another woman [a wife, that is] with no bother. The baby might be sent to a home. And after a time they bring it home as a cousin.

But it is not always that the boys are treated so leniently, and they, too, must emigrate, driven off by public censure.

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834 laughter is best explained as playful censure. For very real
522 censure often breaks out against such a person. It is particu-
587 larly likely to break out into overt punitive action in cases where old farmers threaten the expectations of their heirs by taking young women as second wives. In fact, the one kind of man or woman of considerable age who does not command respect is this. The countryside finds endless amusement in the theme of May and November. Naturally the matchmaking system does lend itself fairly well to matings between oldish men and young women, since ownership of a farm is the basis for a match.

581 The most interesting point of inquiry, then, may well be
554 the connection between the sexual status of the family mem-
183 bers, as we have described it here, and the standing of the family. The sexual status of the members is a reflection of their capacity for carrying alliance among the other families of the countryside. Can we draw, therefore, a connection between rural familistic norms about sexual behavior and the class structure of the rural community?

We know already that marriage in rural Ireland yields us one clue to the connection. At matchmaking the negotiations between the contracting parties concern the relative standing of each. That standing is at stake. The equivalence of dowry and land are arrived at through a careful enumeration of all the past history and the present material substance of the contracting families. The location of the farm, its livestock, its soil, the reputation and ancestry of the family, all these are compared. Backward places, we remember, do not grow big fortunes. Neither do many other kinds of persons and places.

We are dealing here of course only with one broad class, the country people. Yet within the boundaries of rural life there is much to be learned of the country people's treatment of relative prestige and standing among themselves. There are many behaviors in the activity of the countryside

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which express attitudes of social stratification. These do not only express the differences between the country people and outsiders from other classes beyond the confines of the local districts; they have much to do with the intimate details of personal relations in daily life among the small farmers as well. Intimate as they may be, however, these behaviors are nonetheless powerful. Like so much else in rural life, they find their chief expression and their most complete organization around marriage and matchmaking in country custom. In that they are directly a part of the organization of sexual conduct and attitudes among the small farmers.

From this fact springs the seeming paradox of Irish rural life, already mentioned. A social system centering so strongly round the institution of the family condemns a large proportion of its members to celibacy and long-preserved virginity. The explanation lies in the very paradox. Only through marriage does one attain full stature and one's family take its full place in the interlocking alliances of extended kindreds in the countryside. Failure to make a match is not only failure to fulfill one's own destiny of mating and procreating; it is also, as we have seen, failure to provide for the dispersal and re-formation of one's group. It is also, as we shall see, failure to maintain or establish the alliances making status among one's peers.

Thus it is the identification of sexual behavior with familistic role on the one hand and attainment of status on the other that makes the problems of marriage and sex of such great social and emotional importance.

Their importance is both individual and social. Individually, the powerful dispositions and sentiments concerned give a deep-seated biological and physiological basis to the institutional imperatives and the behavioral norms learned in experience of human relations. Socially, the fact that such a basis can be relied upon gives added strength to the attitudes evoked in support of the social institutions of the

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countryside and an added, automatic sanction to the enforcement, through public and official channels, of the accepted behaviors. In this manner, based upon and reinforced by such deep-rooted automatic reactions of individual conscience, the canons of morality, custom, personal habit, religious teaching, and social sanction form a whole piece all together. To hazard a comparison, let us select other central nexuses of custom, attitude, and emotion, among other peoples. By the process described, sexual morality becomes to Irish society, from the country people with whom we are dealing upward through other classes of society, what respect for law is to English society, what filial piety once was to Chinese society.

Let us now see how this mutual incorporation of sexual, marital, and stratificational standards works out in the experience of the countryside.

In the system of relations we have described, the fate of persons at the hands of their fellows and the repute they bear among them are closely connected. Local standing is, of course, a product of values arising in local experience. Consequently when we come upon the comedies and tragedies of life within a specific community, and hear described by the people themselves the course of events through which these little dramas took place and the impression they made upon the witnesses, we are close to observation of the experience which builds a scale of values and the place of individuals in it. The problem of local repute and public opinion can be reviewed in the light of concrete events and referred to actual relationships built out of behavior.

Thus one can come to see these petty events not merely as personal histories but also as functions of the patterns of organization we have been detailing.

If then we should take up the life of a local community and its inhabitants and search it through for its family histories of recent years, we should lay bare the roots of local

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values. Such a study was made in one community studied. Family histories since the famine times were secured from two hundred families of a Clare parish. The histories included farms owned or rented, worked, subdivided, added or lost, in each generation since pre-famine days; names, numbers, sexes, and life-sketches of family members of each generation; occupations of each person not taking to farming; emigrations and the destination of the emigrants in each generation; marriages made in each generation, according to farms married into, occupations of husbands and fathers-in-law, and size of dowry. Much of this material was statistical in form, but along with it a considerable amount of anecdotal material was gathered, describing in detail many local incidents. This information is out of place here; and it will be reported elsewhere. But certain conclusions of relevance to the problem of understanding the social role of marital alliances in the countryside are of importance for the present discussion.

The first of these conclusions concerns the mechanism by which families without farms or with very small and "backward" ones were forced to extinction through celibacy. The second of these conclusions illustrates the means by which alliances made through the matchmaking mechanism provided a channel of upward social movement and incidentally a path of recruitment of the successful children of farmers in the "bad" or poorer lands into the ranks of those of the "good" or better lands.

The first conclusion illustrated by the material of this survey of family histories is one we have already met. Failure to make marital alliances led to failure of family reformation and hence either to celibacy for all the children or to emigration on the part of the whole generation. In the words of the countryside, if a family could find no one with whom to marry "they died out of it."

Even so broad a question as the disappearance of the class

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Even so broad A question as the disappearance of the class
183 of artisans in the countryside comes, for its explanation,
581 under this conclusion. It cannot be understood except in
554 terms of responses to values determined in the relations of familism. The social mechanism by which the local artisans have disappeared – whatever the historic and economic occasion of their fate in the industrial revolution and its aftermath – is something specific to the system of social organization we have described.

The few local artisans who survive today were once members of a numerous group. In the days before railroads and the growth of towns, each local community had its local artisans. Tailors, weavers, carpenters, shoemakers, and smiths followed their lifelong trades and supplied local needs. Their skills descended, like the farmer's farm, from father to son; the trade was "in their blood." Their surplus children have had to disperse to the towns and in emigration. For theirs, too, is a familistic world.

Unless the artisans in the countryside marry within their own fast-diminishing numbers, they, too, must have land and fortune. If they do not get it, they must either marry one of their own kind or stay celibate. Today one finds many survivors of this local class of craftsmen scattered here and there in the countryside. The mere memory of their trade may be all that remains to distinguish them from petty cotters. In the majority of cases they have not married. If they have, without a fortune to transmit, they can find no wives and husbands for their children. Thus the family "dies out of it." Neither alliance nor continuance can be theirs.

The mechanism by which this extinction is brought about is clear enough. Occupational names have emotional significance far beyond their reference to skill and economic
183 function. They are symbols evocative of social stratification,
581 among the small farmers as no less elsewhere.
554 In disputes even within a family, angry reference to ties

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outside the family may well be a method of attack. Where, as here, such ties are a matter of one's "blood," the attack is direct and personal. One's status is part of one's person. How close a part it is can well be seen in the quotation of one farmer's account of transition in family relations at the match:

> If the old people don't like the girl, then the mother and the father go to their room and fight with her every day; and if she has low blood in her, they will take her to task for it, if she has weaver, tinker, or tailor blood. If they don't like her they will not work like they used, but go out on *cuaird* and spread the bad news about her.

The familistic outlook gives all this kind of evocation and reference the character of genealogical commentary. Everything one does or is can be referred to one's "blood." Heredity is the explanation of success or failure, high position or low estate. Since one's heredity includes the occupational and other status of one's forbears and the whole gamut of relations which marked their place in the community, a continuity is preserved between the present and the past which defines one fully as a member of one's group.

Consequently, the instances of failure to find wives and husbands, the instances of courtships opposed by parental and other pressures, the instances of elopements ending in emigration, the instances of families of brothers and sisters who stuck together celibate until old age, are far oftener examples of the force of failure to find a mate of acceptable status than of any other cause. The organization of sexual behavior in the countryside is inseparable from that of the stratification of the community itself.

The second interesting point, again one in which the examination of family histories led to an illumination of the connection between the patterns of sexual organization and those of small farmer familism, is in a sense the reverse of the coin.

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183 581 554 In these histories, when a countrywoman explained that she or someone she knew had married from bad land into good, or paid a larger dowry than she might have, had she stayed in her own townland, she referred to a movement that was quite readily discernible in her parish. She had experienced, and took pride in, a natural wedding of desire and ambition, which combined, for her as an individual, the instincts of a woman to be wife and mother and the demands of her group's advancement in the systems of familist alliances that made up her community. This was the individual side of the matter. Many indeed were the farmers and their wives who were careful to specify to us how successful a match had been in carrying a larger-than-might-be dowry to better land. One might grumble perhaps about one's lot, if there were anything to grumble over, but in such a case one might be proud that one had assured one's children of a better farm and a better standing than one's own.

166 581 But there was a social side of the matter which showed that this ambition was not a merely personal thing. For in the parish in which we gathered detailed information an interesting statistical movement could be seen. This movement was reflected in the geography of the district.

Marriages since 1864 in this parish have shown a tendency to move brides from the westward out of the poorer lands eastward toward richer farms. The parish happens to lie between higher, poorer soil to the westward and a more fertile area to the east. One must know the local topography and the fertility of the soil to understand the details of the movement. But its over-all tendency is statistically clear. None of the marriages among small farmers and their fellows have taken place (if they took place in the County at all) beyond a six-mile range of distance between the farm married-out-of and the farm married-into. In all cases the movement is small. Yet, small as it is, it shows a distinct tendency. In general, the higher and more westerly town-

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463 326 554 Of these local specialists only the smith survives in any strength today. He shares with the mason the admiration the country people feel for physical strength and prowess. Perhaps it is this that made the more sedentary occupations of weaver, shoemaker, and tailor of less prestige. Thus the crippled son, as the quotation says, might be put to one of them.

463 294 The tailor was often a peripatetic. He moved around from house to house and community to community where he was known, living and eating among the family. He was made welcome, not only as a maker of clothes but also as a carrier of gossip. Today the few tailors who survive in the country districts are petty cotters with only a memory of their trade. The few still active ones have retreated to the towns. Most of the farmers' clothing is now shop-bought and factory-made.

463 286 [283] The weaver was perhaps the most sedentary of the local craftsmen. He is the one who has failed to survive even in the towns. The women of the farm families carded and spun the wool into yarn until home spinning died out, and broke and scutched the flax for linen, but the weaver made it into cloth. He spent all his days indoors, moving from one side of his loom to the other in a small room heavy-laden with fluff and lint. The farmers seem to remember most strongly the unhealthiness of the life, but they tell one also of the weavers' arrogance when their skill was in great demand. The following is the kind of description one can still get, the first part of it discoursing on weavers in general and the second relating the history of the local man:

> In the old days the weaver might have enough work to keep him busy for four months and, when you went to see him, he would put you off and tell you to come back in a fortnight for your goods. It would be no good for you, none in the world, if you didn't take a bowl of butter and a few dozen eggs to him

as a way of getting him to start on your yarn in a hurry. If you didn't, he would not do it until he got ready. They were independent, all right, and then when they were finished, you had to reach down into your pocket and pay for what he did. There used to be a lot of weavers here, but they are all gone now. The women have got out of weaving the wool.

A weaver here, Paddy Seán R—, was a very fine fellow though he drank a lot. You cannot blame him for that because his job was a mean one and bad on the health. He worked to keep his mother out of the workhouse and till the day she died he would not let her go there. Wasn't that a decent thing for him to do? Afterwards he went to Galway and then he came back here and as an old man he died in the workhouse. But wasn't it a decent thing he would not let his poor old mother go and her going up the streets of the town every morning collecting the urine from the people who lived in the house [to use for bleaching].

These three occupations were the meaner ones in the eyes of the country people. It was not that they degraded their followers. Rather it was that they were intrinsically of less value than the more robust crafts of outdoor life. Something of the sexual dichotomization of labor was involved in this attitude equating sedentary, house-bound pursuits with the feminine spheres of activity.

The chief exponents of the robuster, more masculine crafts within local ken were the carpenter, the mason, the house builder, and the smith. But there were many others. Between the landless or "backward" cotters and laborers, who might turn their hand to anything, and the small farmers, who were themselves occasionally forced to turn to harvesting abroad or to road-mending and stone-breaking at home, there were as many specialists as there were activities in which special renown and skill could be attained. In fact, the development of local skills seems restricted only by the limits of the *matériel* which peasant life requires.

Other local experts were the thatcher, the cattle doctor or "vet," often a herdsmen with a lifelong experience of

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476 would be waiting outside to whisk them away or to have a dance.
571 Then when they ground the oats, they had a quern and the men and women would come together and each take a turn at grinding so it was not tiring and they would have a big supper of spuds and milk for all of them before they would go. Then they would get together for the carding and spinning before the thread was taken to the weaver. The young women might be carding and the old women spinning and the *meitheal* of
[535] girls would work away. They would get a dance when they would be done.

All the above description of close concert and deeply imprinted habitual work relations among the members of the local communities in the framework of the organization of behaviors of age and sex depict the now dead past. The same activities today, though certain techniques are different, bring out the same picture of work relations in an emotionally charged unison among persons of similar status within the community. The present-day hay harvest is very little different, though mowing machines are used. The great hayrick is still built in the same setting, and still calls for celebration. Everyone still waits for a signal from the hayrick rigger, a personage of considerable importance on such a day.

476 The unison of working on oats harvest with flails is gone.
571 But in its place is a threshing machine, and its owners come around and a local crew is got up out of the local men. The
463 same jollities still reign. In all this our chief interest is not
●554 in changing custom. Rather it is from this kind of observation that a new conclusion arises. The factors of differentiation about skills and techniques in the rural communities give rise to statuses of the same kind as before, statuses based upon the development of a specialty by a member of the local community which is recognized and valued within the habitual activities of his fellows. Here is an opportunity to see the embryonic form of division of labor and development of occupations in terms of the life of a community. It is a continuous process.

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493 two or three motor cars for important guests and the prin-
494 cipals. At election time the local political organizations of the national parties provide free transport to the polls for the old and lame. In all else the motor car is the mark of the townsman, either the produce-collector in his lorry or the man of influence on a jaunt.

493 Even at such times of high ceremony as weddings, funerals,
494 and elections the country people still use the horse and
● 554 trap or sidecar. This is the traditional mode of polite travel, and it retains its popularity today. The trap is used only by the whole family or by its adult farm-owning members. It is used only in connection with activities of importance which mark their own status and those to whom they travel. It is always used at funerals and marriages. It sometimes transports all the family in Sunday best to church. It is brought out to honor a visitor or announce the arrival or departure of a friend. And it is used occasionally on visits of state to the town. Sunday clothes always go with it. It would be a very big farmer who used the trap in all his trips to town.

493 The vehicle-of-all-work, and the one on which produce
494 goes to market and shop-bought goods come back, is the common two-wheeled cart. The farmers call it a "car." With the addition of side boards it becomes a "creel" and can carry small livestock, turf, and many another bulky object. Occasionally it appears on Sunday, but one never sees it in times of high ceremony such as in a funeral procession. It is the vehicle of everyday working life. Even the younger members of the family may use it sometimes in going about their work. But it is most often to be seen in the hands of the man of the house.

The ass and car, on the other hand, ordinarily has no such eminence. The donkey cart is a woman's vehicle. It takes her and her farm produce to and from the crossroad center. In a town market it is no accident that one can find the

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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adult; the boy learns work as he learns manhood.

Also, the child grows up within the full complex of life within the farm family. His first petty errands are a mere incident in the relationship he builds up with his parents and brothers. He learns not only his work but the whole code of conduct which constitutes the folkways of his class, at their hands. This conduct is itself part of his relation to them. It ranges all the way from the errands he runs for his superiors in the family to the learning of his prayers and the development of the sentiments which make sexual behaviour of any kind an offence, and of that within the family, incest.

Consequently, in so well-knit a group, the command which his father (and his mother) exercises over the son in farm work is only one aspect of that control. His subordination continues as long as his father lives. Even though the major work of the farm devolves upon the son and his brothers, they have no control of the direction of farm work nor the disposal of the farm's income. I say the son and his brothers, for all the sons are equal in this subordination; rural Ireland knows neither primogeniture nor junior right. As long as they remain at home upon the farm they share this status equally.

The behaviour that reflects this state of affairs can be readily observed. Sons go to market and fair from the time they are ten or twelve, but they buy or sell little if anything. Father and sons can be

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to subordination, though they cannot clothe their acts in words and build moralities and philosophies out of them.

Today, in a democratic country, it is part of the folkways either to deny that such activities exist, or to demand that, like some unmentionable, they remain unstudied and unsaid. Yet, the student of human behaviour cannot neglect so rich and so deep-rooted a fount of human action. Nor can he afford to relegate the study entirely to distant horizons. Caste in India is a relatively safe topic for an American; caste in New England or in the South is a high explosive. Only the most painstaking objectivity and the most colourless vocabulary can safeguard the temerarious investigator. And the only fair treatment is that of the laboratory: to treat the behaviours in their own settings and to analyse them for nothing more than their function in that setting. If one adopts this view, one can no more blame the Smiths for snubbing the Joneses then one can berate one protoplasm for repelling another. In either case, one seeks the reason why and describes the manner how.

In the Irish countryside we are dealing with one broad class, the country-people. The behaviours which preserve the distinctions between them and others—townsmen, big farmers, gentry, and so on —do not concern us here. Yet within their own community—within the essential democracy of rural life—the country-people can be seen to act

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554 565 in many ways to separate, to draw distinctions, to repel the nonconformable. Remember that preposition 'within'. For these behaviours do not discriminate between broad groups, like the hauteur of a nobleman toward a lackey.

They operate within a larger inclusion. They are remotely like the ways of a schoolboy of the eighth grade who may scoff at the seventh-grader, look down on him, and bully him half in fun. Yet let the outside world break in, in the person of the teacher or rival schoolboys, and the distinction vanishes in the violence of united opposition. Nevertheless, intimate as they may be, these behaviours are none the less powerful. And like so much else in rural life, they find their chief expression and their most complete organization at the match, in country marriage.

182 554 565 From this fact springs the seeming paradox of Irish rural life. A social system centring so strongly round marriage and the family condemns a large proportion of its members to celibacy and long-preserved virginity. The explanation lies in the very paradox. Only the words are antithetical. It is through marriage that one's group and oneself attains and retains full stature. Failure in either sphere leaves unrealized the other.

From this fact, too, comes much of the homely comedy and tragedy of rural life. One prefers the human terms. That comedy and that tragedy show themselves to the student of social behaviour in

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another guise. They are controls upon the system. 182
They are unconscious patterns of human action 554
whose social function is to ensure conformities and 565
to enforce cohesions against internal disruption and external defection. Much of the fate of human beings, both at their own hands and at those of their fellows, conforms to the controls the community exerts in response to the system of customs and values by which it builds itself and in which it ensures its preservation.

Tragedy, for example, lies in the fate of one 463
romantic human type in rural Ireland. In the last 178
century before the introduction of railroads and the growth of towns, each local community had its local artisans. Tailors, weavers, carpenters, shoemakers, smiths, followed their lifelong trades and supplied local needs. Open any account of rural Ireland before the last quarter of the last century, such as the tales of William Carleton, and you will be rewarded with a full-blooded picture of this lusty crew. Their crafts were very primitive, but their place was sure. Since then, nearly all of them, except the smith, their peer, have been swept away before the skill of townsmen and factory. These men supplied their neighbours, lived among them, were an integral part of rural life. When poverty struck too deep, they became peripatetics, like the wandering singers, scholars, fiddlers, spalpeen labourers, petty hawkers and beggars who swarmed the roads of Ireland. The world of fairy-tale was

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178 463 not remote from the farmers who knew these men. Rumpelstiltskin, in a Gaelic dress, was at one's very doors.

In remote communities some few of these survive. Where they do, the community can still make use of them. Commissioning them follows a traditional pattern of gifts and courtesies little resembling conventional monetary commerce. Their skill descends, like the farmer's farm, from father to son; it is 'in the blood'. Their surplus children must disperse to towns and in emigration. For theirs too is a familistic world.

178 463 556 Unless they marry within their own fast-diminishing numbers, they too must have land and fortune. Now and again one of them rises in the world. He acquires land, he sets aside a fortune, he marries sons and daughters on the land. Year by year, his trade goes into the discard, till one fine day he is a full-fledged small farmer.

463 554 But such upward mobility is rare and difficult. Economic change has swept his skill aside. The local artisan is more often a landless man, with nothing but a garden patch. The services he performs, however indispensable, do not give him equality with his neighbours. His standing is low, though his person is welcome. A farmer might 'put a son to a trade', perhaps, and often did not long ago. But it would be the lame son, the one not 'suited to the land'.

So today one finds broken remnants of this local

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craftsmanship scattered in cabins here and there through the countryside. The mere memory of their trade may be all that still remains to them to tell one that they are not the petty cotters they seem to be. They have not married, or if they have, without a fortune to transmit, they can find no wives and husbands for their children. Or here and there the countryman will point out the shells of their houses; "The family all died out of it", he will explain.

For the pressure of social standing is a powerful force, even in such a setting. Rather than admit an inevitable decline into the status of a landless labourer, they must 'die out of it'. One's standing, we remember, is one's blood. If they cannot amass a tangible representation of that blood in the dowry, they cannot marry. Neither alliance nor continuance can be theirs.

Even if they do succeed, and merge by marriage into the farmers' commonality, they bear a trace of a different origin yet a while longer. Change is slow where lines are tightly drawn; even peasant society knows its parvenus. And if dispute and anger flare up to strip life to its essential core, what insults do we hear? The countryman 'throws up' to his fellow, not his face or his manners or his animal likeness, in a wild *chameau* or *schwein*, but his descent. He damns him with the reminder of 'carpenter' or 'weaver blood'.

Strange as this epithet may seem to us, it brings

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463 an adequate, instantaneous response. The psycho-
554 logist knows that expressions of anger, like any
578 other emotion, are conditioned within particular social systems. And here the Irish system works, in its own fashion, to draw and to reinforce the inevitable distinctions and discriminations of social life.

522 From this fact springs comedy as well. Joke and fun play round this central theme. A good deal of old custom and traditional pastime cluster here. The picturesque buffoonery of the 'strawboys' —privileged masqueraded figures whose mock-dangerous invasion of the wedding feast has been dignified to represent a last remnant of a primeval bride-capture—is better explained thus more simply. Such symbolism as the gaiety of Shrove Tuesday, when in Clare, at least, young men beat loudly on the doors of those unmarried women who took no husband through the Shrovetide, is still direct enough.

For comedy and laughter soften the sharpness of social controls. They are the velvet glove that clothes the iron hand.

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In such a case, the course of the countryman's path through rural life is plainly charted. In the normal event, the circle of his friends and contemporaries must change and progress. There comes a time when either he or they must break away altogether. Distinction in the world of the young men's pursuits is at best but a nine days' or nine years' wonder. He faces perforce a new orientation of sentiment and a new sort of behaviour. Just as he moves to a new social place at marriage, he must move onward among the cliques of his fellows in the community.

The case of John Quinn in Rynamona, the newcomer to the old men's house, can bear re-examination in this light. Quinn first belonged to a group which met at the house of one Joseph McMahon, better known as Oscair, the Hercules of Irish saga, for his great strength. Oscair was the centre of the group. He was a rural carpenter, with only a small plot of garden and his house. But he was a good workman, a good singer, a gay-hearted jokester, and something of a repository of folk-tale. He was between forty-five and fifty.

The men who collected round Oscair's fire were aged from thirty-five to sixty. Like their age, their habit was intermediate between old and young. Talk was the order of the day; they seldom played cards. Oscair's song and ballad enlivened the gathering.

Some of the men who came here spoke with

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573 'weight'; they tried to turn the talk into a discussion
554 of the affairs of the community. Old Moroney, the 'strongest' farmer of Rynamona, who would not go to the old men's house, came here. John Quinn came. Before he began his entrance into the old men's house, which we have described, he spoke here with 'weight'. He gambled willingly enough, but he showed himself more and more impatient with the 'playboys' of young fellows. Another man, O'Sullivan, a herdsman of sixty-five and the local 'vet', also came. The rest were younger men, farmer's sons.

But this was a very unstable group. When finally John Quinn moved onward it fell to pieces, and Oscair's hearth was left untenanted each night.

For what shows itself here is a transitional state; the members of the group were in some way or another a little off the centres of their kind in Rynamona. For a moment were gathered here those who could move upward, like John Quinn. Gradually, they could attain full status, they could move into the social place which centres family headship, the land, a line of descent, and the old man's role within the community. Oscair's hearth for them was a roadside resting-place.

With these intermediates were gathered the representatives of another anomalous social place. Both Oscair and O'Sullivan 'the vet' were important figures in the community; their occupations and their skills won them respect and admiration

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over the countryside. At least, O'Sullivan, the older man, was free to come and go wherever he might wish. But both were 'landless' men; they could never attain full peasant status. In the identifications of Irish familism they were condemned to celibacy; neither could feel comfortable in the old men's *cuaird*. There was no place there for them, except as Oscair's behaviour showed, as 'playboys' and entertainers. So they, too, must occupy an interstice in the structural alignments of rural social life.

For once again the examination of rural life leads one perforce to concepts of structural balance. The organization of the community takes its form in the social behaviour of cliques among the countrypeople. That behaviour cannot be disassociated from the characteristic alignment of sentiment and interests which at once separates and reintegrates the generations. And the alignment itself in its turn relates the countrymen to one another in the community, upon the basis of relative age, with the familistic nexus in which are balanced prestige, command, the land and the continuities of descent. That to which the countryman is attached is a social order, as Sir Horace Plunkett alone among the commentators on the Irish scene could see. And a social order is an active living growth whose embrace soon gathers in the whole of life.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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rear ends of the shafts, which are, however, left projecting so as to take the weight of the tilted car when it is not in use. It is these projecting shafts or 'trams' which give the wheel-car the appearance of a slide-car on wheels and seem to confirm the suggested evolution (Fig. 55).

In eighteenth-century Ireland possession of a wheel-car was a mark of social distinction, and entire districts were without wheeled vehicles of any kind. Down to the middle of the nineteenth century it was considered 'respectable' to go to 'meetings' in a wheel-car in the Presbyterian parts of north Antrim. In the course of the nineteenth century, as the larger spoke-wheeled cart was adopted by prosperous farmers, the little wheel-car sought refuge in the poor mountainous districts where we find it clinging precariously today. As late as the 1914–18 war one was in use on a farm on Black Mountain, within the city boundary of Belfast (Pl. 8, 2).

The wheel-car has its place in history because it was the ancestor of the nineteenth century jaunting-car which Lloyd Praeger rightly lists as one of the essentially native Irish products.[1] The platform of the wheel-car, to which a box body or a wicker-work creel was secured when goods were being carried, became a seat, covered with a straw mat, when the vehicle was used for social occasions. The passengers sat on each side, back to back, their feet dangling near the ground or resting on a hay-rope slung fore and aft, which could accommodate any length of leg. By the end of the eighteenth century this 'side-car', fitted with wooden foot-rests, had become a standard hiring vehicle, and it needed only the substitution of spoked for solid wheels, the addition of springs and consequent alterations of height to give the Irish jaunting-car which Bianconi adopted in 1815 and later developed into the four-wheeled long-car.[2] There can be no doubt that 'the Bians', traversing the highways and byways of the whole country, made a contribution to the social and economic life of Ireland which was, in its day, as important as that of the railway in the latter part of the century or the motor bus in the twentieth century.

The spoked wheel, which throughout the eighteenth century

[1] R. Ll. Praeger, *The Way that I Went* (1937), Ch. I.

[2] I. J. Herring, *U.J.A.*, 3 (1940), 115–22; *U.J.A.*, 7 (1944), 42–46.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

493 was reserved for coaches and the carriages of the rich, was popu-
177 larized by its adoption for farm carts (Scots carts) under the
[401] improving zeal of landlords towards the end of the century. In Ulster, which has always looked to Scotland for its inspiration, the Scots cart was first used for transporting linen, and one thinks of it spreading along the improved roads and being copied and adapted to local needs and traditions. Around Lough Erne, for instance, one reads of large one-horse carts, adopted by carriers in the early nineteenth century, which had 'trams' or rearshafts four feet long,[1] and these projections, surely a reminiscence of the long slide-car runners, are still characteristic of the 'flat' carts of the west and south-west (Fig. 60).

493 The Scots cart with its four-foot wheels was able to take twice the load of the native wheel-car, and as industry increased and roads were improved through the nineteenth century it drove the block-wheeled cars off the roads. But for rough work in the fields and bogs various types of slipe were preferred: the cart
● [554] was little used for harvesting and its possession was to some
[531] extent a sign of prestige. (Unlike the native car, the woodwork of the cart was and is brightly painted, usually in red and blue.) The slipe and slide-car were better adapted to moist ground, to undrained fields and the uneven surface of ridge and furrow. As roads and farm practice were improved it was a new version of Scots cart (Fig. 60) which ultimately drove out the slide-car and the wheel-car in Ulster. It seems that the older varieties of Irish carts were derived from the Leith cart of the eastern lowlands of Scotland.[2] The body consisted of little more than a slatted platform without fixed sides and ends. This 'flat cart', as distinct from the 'box cart', is the usual pattern of farm cart in the west of Ireland and, fitted with springs, is the common hawker's cart. As a farm cart it suits the small farmer because it can be used for a variety of purposes by fitting different kinds of sides, for example tall slatted 'crates' for carrying turf.

493 Towards the middle of the nineteenth century there was
177 evolved, in Lanarkshire and the neighbouring counties, the box
531 cart with upright panelled sides perhaps derived from the

[1] L. Atthill, *Recollections of an Irish Doctor* (1911), 44.
[2] R. L. Edgeworth, *An Essay on the Construction of Roads and Carriages* (1813).

 [Text continues on p. 178]

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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463 survivors of these wandering folk are the tinkers, sworn enemies
326 of the farmers but useful in many ways to the farmers' wives. Though miscalled gypsies they are of native Irish stock and have little, if any, Romany blood. Numbering between 5,000 and 6,000 but declining, they now find little scope for their traditional skill as white smiths but subsist mainly on collecting scrap metal and dealing in horses. Down to recent times their
[273] services were in demand for making and repairing the stills in which home-made whiskey (poteen) was manufactured.
●[554] Weavers and tailors as well as tinkers were despised by farming folk as 'travellers', whereas the smith was held in high esteem.

463 Most of the home industries depended on wood and other plant products, natural or cultivated, and on the skin and hair of
178 animals. Nearly all these crafts are now dead or dying and their products, perishable by nature, are either gone or fast disappearing. A few skills live on, others survive in children's pastimes or in the memories of old people. The unwritten lore of
[824] the countryside included a vast store of information on all the
[825] varied trees, plants and animals, birds and fishes which in times past played their part in the lives of the people. Nearly every
[861] species had its practical, medicinal or magical uses, and through careful observation, empirical knowledge and a wealth of poetic fancy, a vivid interest in the world of nature was maintained and passed on from one generation to another. Much of this lore has been lost with the decline of the Gaelic tongue and the spread of formal education and book-learning. The
[871] country school must conform to a clerk-breeding curriculum designed to meet urban demands. The destruction of woodland and the debasement of standards of living which followed the adoption of the alien potato and the consequent famines had serious consequences on home crafts. Then mass-produced goods came to drive out many products which depended on a discriminating knowledge of local materials. Thus barbed wire has taken the place of its rustic prototype—a hay-rope strung with thorns—and binder-twine has killed a dozen varieties of home-made ropes and thongs. The economist might think of them as bonds tethering rural communities to the soil, but to the sociologist they imply spiritual as well as physical links with mother earth.

14: Westropp B-4, 5 (no date)1910-12
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

MacNamara.[17] A certain Flann MacDonnchaidh, a very poor man, lived near the bush long ago, and dreamt "again and again" that, if he went to the Bald Bridge, Droichiod maol-na-Luimneaigh (Ball's Bridge in Limerick City), he would find money and make his fortune. He went there and walked up and down until he was worn out. He was on the point of going away when a cobbler asked him what he was about, and he told his story. The cobbler laughed, and told how he himself had dreamed of finding treasure under a bush at a place called Skaghvickencrow, but had wasted no time in looking for it.[18] MacDonnchaidh returned home, dug, and found a flag with an inscription in an unknown tongue. He left the stone on his hearth, and, as no local scholar could read it, he troubled no more about the matter. Years went by, and one night a wandering schoolmaster asked for hospitality, and of course got it. The "angel unawares" translated the inscription as "one side is more lucky than the other." Next day, when his guest was gone, MacDonnchaidh dug, and found so much money as to make rich men of himself and his descendants.[19]

The only tale of church treasure I have met with is that the silver bells of either Killeany or Kilmoon church lie hidden in the brook between their ruins called from the legend Owenacluggan.

Funerals and graveyards.—Though I have frequently attended funerals of persons of all classes and denominations in many parts of Clare, I have very little to tell of the ceremonies. Sometimes I have seen spades crossed on a grave, and long ago saw three crosses, made of twigs from a hawthorn tree in a graveyard, placed on a coffin. The body is usually carried feet foremost round the graveyard sunwise, and sometimes, but rarely, three times. The horrible habit of digging out all the contents of the grave is usual; the older coffin planks are thrown away, and the human remains

[17] *The Journal of the Limerick Field Club*, Part 4, p. 42.

[18] Cf. the well-known story of the Swaffham tinker and London Bridge.

[19] I heard this tale, perhaps in 1870, from John O'Halloran at Edenvale near Ennis, about the Crowes. Certainly that family (MacEnchroe's) has a hawthorn bush in its armorial bearings, and the motto "Skagh M'Enchroe." Dr. MacNamara conjectures that Flann's surname was really MacEnchroe.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

624 875 [793] [554] more independent of the curate (One in recent years quit his post, it is held, because he chafed at restrictions imposed on him by the priest.); also, they are apolitical and participate less in the gamut of local affairs. The prestige of the headmaster derives from his having been selected by the parish priest who supports his actions, his status as a "scholar," and the discipline that he exerts in the school with its vestigial effects on those who have graduated. Few islanders will openly contest his decisions in school and in civic matters.

The important nonacademic tasks performed by the headmaster are signing official forms—a duty that he shares with the bailiff, drawing up and witnessing the signing of wills, writing letters for the islanders, especially those directed to the county council and departments of the central government, and giving advice on such matters as the advisability of emigrating and of matrimonial matches. [571] Like the curates, the headmasters seldom have tried to direct community projects and social affairs, other than dances and inter-island competitions. The present headmaster considers himself atypical in many respects, in that he is youthful, has exceptional skill in playing the accordion, likes companionship and the festivities of party and pub, and has rapport with older boys and young men with whom he associates more than did his predecessors; as a result, he is the prime mover in social events—organizing dances and donating his musical talent. Older islanders often find him aloof and will apologize for "taking his time" when seeking favors of him.

875 593 Parents have little contact with the headmaster as regards the education of their children, and, although permitted and sometimes urged to do so, they seldom visit the school. They will consult with him about such matters as health problems of their children, but not about educational policies; nor do they complain to him 875 of his role as pedagogue—"What the teacher does is right." Because of the severity 876 of his discipline, and that of the other two teachers, and the fear that it arouses in [861] his pupils, parents use him as a threat in disciplining their children at home. This [123] is a distinction that he shares with the nurse and her hypodermic needle and me with my large size and robust manner; being the ominous *Fear an Stáisiún* ("Man of the Station," because my wife and I rented for a time an apartment in the coast guard station) made it difficult for me to obtain young people as respondents until many months had passed. As a result of the rigid discipline exerted in the school, maintained by actions which include even whipping and priestly imprecation, a degree of orderliness, quietness, and attentiveness on the part of the students is achieved which would arouse incredulity among American teachers and parents [171] unless witnessed. Discipline in the school merely reflects that in the home, and a favorite pastime of Irish living in the vicinity of Shannon Airport is to observe the interaction of American parents and their usually obstreperous offspring in the transient room there.

624 [829] Whereas the headmaster attracts the least amount of anti-authority sentiment of any other figure who regulates to a marked degree the lives of the folk, the king attracts the most. The latter is the senior of the two publicans, in age and role, whose home in Low Village accommodates guests as well as the shop and [123] pub. Information concerning him was as difficult to come by as that concerning curates whom I knew, in that he resented my presence and refused to cooperate

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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> Obfuscation is the rule, and while it may seem a little foolish at times, there is no doubt that it makes for a great deal of fun. It cultivates too a sharpness of ear, a feeling for half-tones and shades and subtleties, and a wary alertness that would be worth its weight in gold should one ever be lost in a jungle (Tracy 1953:20–21).

The quotation in some measure applies to interviewing in Inis Beag, where my wife and I took great pains to disentangle real from ideal culture by substantiating interview data with observation wherever possible.

The existence of the conditions depicted by Tracy, as well as the numerous cultural practices shrouded in secrecy, led us to return to the island several times after 1960 before I attempted this book, to emphasize various modes of participant observation, to devise *ad hoc* research methods of an unorthodox nature, to "hone" our orthodox tools and employ cross-checking techniques at every stage of our project, and to cultivate that "sharpness of ear . . . feeling for half-tones and shades and subtleties, and . . . wary alertness" which so distinguishes ethnographic endeavor as an art as well as a systematic epistemology. The use by many folk of "wings of fancy," "honeyed words," and "obfuscations"—popularly known as "blarney"—reflects a long tradition of verbal skill. It is a vital component of Irish and Inis Beag "charm," which often is the product of a delicately poised set of defense mechanisms; beneath it can lie feelings of inferiority and dislike, envy, and jealousy of others. Blarney can serve very effectively to shield genuine thoughts and feelings and thus defend the ego. Irish folklore and literature also reflect this tradition, and it is probably expressed most formidably in James Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake* (At least one Irish folklorist has collected "Joycean" utterances from peasants.).

Prestige Status

Inis Beag lacks a class system, and the status symbols which affect human relationships are few. That land and capital—known collectively as "money," "wealth," or "riches"—are the major symbols is revealed in the frequently heard phrase, "If you have money and your health, you're all right." (Health alone is mentioned by those of lesser means.). The men of highest prestige are the king and the 13 who own 24 or more acres of land. But they and their families do not interact more with one another than with others, for, as we have noted, the web of kinship rather than the possession of status attributes largely determines who will interact with whom and in what manner. Nor is their style of life different from that of other islanders, since material possessions and social etiquette are relatively unimportant in the status system. Although the king is a "man of few gardens," his capital, charismatic personality, and "connections" with priests, politicians, and civil servants earn him his high position in the status hierarchy. The prestige which comes with land ownership is based more on the fact of its possession than on the potential wealth that it represents. Men with large holdings can, of course, build more fields and on the increased acreage raise more cattle and sheep and grow more surplus crops for sale, but few take advantage of this oppor-

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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556 tunity to create additional capital; they are content to rest on their psychological [157] laurels, are limited in their aspirations, and are indolent. They betray a smugness [124] of attitude much resented by their less prestigeful fellows. A woman spoke contemptuously of the "great estates" boasted of by these men, when she discussed with me the many land disputes that she had witnessed during her lifetime.

554 556 423 When one asks the folk to rank prestige symbols and the positions of individuals in the status hierarchy, the only consensus which emerges is the placing of land and capital at the apex of the rank order of symbols, the assigning of men who possess these in greatest quantity to the top of the hierarchy, and the placing of landless men at the bottom. Least prestigeful among the landless are those who are descendants of fisherfolk, most of whose families were recent migrants to Inis Beag. An example of the verbal abuse to which they are subjected is a remark made to one of them by the king in a heated argument, who said, "Why don't you spend your time gathering periwinkles like your father?"; the man replied with equal venom, "Who was your father, a king?" Other prestige symbols delineated by the folk, although not mentioned by all and variously ranked, are advanced education, prestigeful kin abroad, economic skills, and singing, dancing, and storytelling abilities. Strength and courage occasionally are cited, but they [178] are considered symbols of a past era (which nativism and primitivism make difficult to assess) and have come to lose much of their significance.

554 556 [123] Only one family in the island prides itself on its material possessions, because of the influence of the householder's brother in the United States who sends remittances, so it is said, and often visits Inis Beag for lengthy stays. I was asked to take photographs of this family, whose members posed before various pieces of modern furniture and appliances, to be sent to relatives—the only such [356] request ever made of me. There are a few families, however, which pride themselves [515] on the neatness and cleanliness of their houses and streets and the appearance [171] of their members, and they are apt to denigrate families which are slovenly. The [184] lack of emphasis on material possessions in Inis Beag presents a startling contrast to the situation which prevails in most of the Western world, including many peasant societies and the mainland Irish; equally contrasting is the apparent lack of opprobrium attached to doing relief work on the roads and receiving the dole.

555 871 Although 28 islanders have received some secondary education during the past 15 years (excluding priests and nuns), only 2 have attended university—both of them before the Second World War at University College, Dublin. Two women and a man have become teachers, and the former have returned to Inis Beag to teach in the national school. Most of the advanced students today are preparing to teach or nurse or are gaining technical skills, and it is not expected by their parents that they will return to the island to live permanently. Families are boastful of their members with advanced education, and those families without such representation often urge their children to do better in the local school, and try to muster financial support for their high school education if scholarships are not forthcoming. I was told by a man disgusted with the lack of interest in school shown by his son, "The man who uses a pen is better off than the man who uses a spade or trammel net." Prestige also is gained through having a close relative 567 793 become a nun or priest or achieve success in the business or professional world, [555]

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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especially outside of Ireland. Four islanders have entered orders—two priests and two nuns—and have brought their families not only prestige but an aura of sanctity; it is believed by the folk that God bestows grace on his earthly representatives and on their kin as well. Even the king is thought to receive some measure of supernatural support for the period of time that he spent during his youth, as is rumored, as a servant at Maynooth Seminary.

The folk rank one another according to their ability to row the *curach*, fish, farm, knit, and perform other economic tasks, although such talents do not bring the prestige that they once did. I often have heard individuals chaffed publicly, sometimes even to their faces, for possessing less than average skills, and many persons have told me privately that they admire or envy the skills of others and wish that they themselves were more adept. A man who owns land in the quarter of another village told me that he works painstakingly in setting a garden there, since his efforts will be appraised by the alien villagers and pitilessly condemned if found wanting. Women gain most of their prestige through performing well the tasks ascribed to them by the division of labor. The economic skills of individuals who lived in the past are lauded more than those of contemporary islanders, reflecting the shift of emphasis in the prestige system; this is far more the case with singing, dancing, and storytelling, as well as with the display of strength and courage. Institutionalized storytelling had disappeared from Inis Beag before 1960, although raconteurs of note still hold forth in the pubs and at small social gatherings. These persons, and the several who excel at singing and dancing, are held in high repute. Probably the best liked of the islanders is a man of 72 years who is admired for his wit, charm, friendliness, and agile step dancing. When drinking in the pubs, he enjoys telling anecdotes about his past experiences, singing and dancing, expressing a simulated sadness at his bachelor estate, and poking sly fun at the behavior of certain folk. Although he is landless and thought to be overly lazy, he is ranked high in the prestige hierarchy because of his esthetic talents and occasional *joie de vivre*. His recluse brother of opposite temperament remarked sadly, "Even the stones of the island know him, but no one knows me." Another landless man, now deceased, who was about the same age, enjoyed high status because he was a traditional storyteller, was noted as a young man for his exceptional strength and athletic and rowing prowess, had spent a decade in the United States, and by reading had educated himself well above the level of most of the folk.

Stories abound concerning once famous men of strength and courageous deeds in Inis Beag and the surrounding region. These anecdotes are recounted more during the summer months than the winter ones, when tourists are within earshot and can be suitably impressed. Acts of courage performed by folk in the past mostly deal with mishaps which occurred to crews while fishing or traveling to and from nearby islands or the mainland. The feats of strength performed by former athletes—such as putting the shot, long jumping, and "throwing the half-hundred"—are well within the realm of possibility, but other feats usually are grossly exaggerated. Examples of the latter are the man who, grasping the base of the front leg of a chair in which sat a person weighing 11 stones (154 pounds), lifted it with one hand, also the man who raised over his head "with ease" a struggling opponent of 16 stones (224 pounds) in a pub fight.

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796
at breakfast and lamb, if available, at supper, and the family goes out only to attend [262]
mass. Many homes are decorated then for the 12 days, with cards received and [363]
sprigs of holly placed on windowsills and fireplace mantels and crepe paper and
balloons hung from the ceiling. More visiting among relatives is done between [574]
St. Stephen's Day and Epiphany than at any other time of the year, and guests are
treated to cakes and drinks, which include liquor.

764
Whereas the folk during the Christmas season are the most optimistic and
expansive, they are the least so for the three or more days following the death of
one of their number. Work halts until after the burial of the deceased—"out of
respect for the body"—and subdued talk focuses on death and salvation and the
tribulations of life on earth. It is at this time that the masochism of the islanders is
most in evidence, and they are most prone to discuss the teachings of the church,
to reveal doubts concerning the afterworld, and to bemoan their own sinful lives.
In evaluating the career of the person who has just died, an attempt is made to [761]
explain the cause of his demise, and both natural and supernatural causes are con-
sidered. Most deaths are attributed to the natural causes of old age, illness, and
accident; but death also can come as the result of God's will and the actions of
the Devil and malignant pagan forces, such as witches of the evil eye and ghosts.
765
The immediate mourning for one who dies before the age of 40 years is deep and
prolonged, particularly if small children are left with only a single parent, and it
is believed that "the good die young." One of the most disliked traditions in Inis
Beag is that of formal mourning for a year, during which time social activities for
close relatives of the deceased are curtailed severely; they cannot attend parties,
sing, dance, or play music in their homes, and men must reduce in number their
visits to the pubs. Life is so dull as a matter of course, so the complaint is, that
placing restrictions on what few social activities are available makes it almost
unbearable.

764
When a person dies, his body is "waked" in the house until taken in pro-
cession to the church during the late afternoon of the day following death. Another
procession escorts the coffin to the cemetery early the next morning, after it has
stood the night unattended near the altar. How many folk attend the wake and [602]
compose the two processions depends on the number of the dead person's kin, his [554]
prestige status, and how well he was liked. The "laying out" of the corpse for the
wake is done by close female relatives of the deceased; they wash the body and
powder its face, put on the clothes or habit, and prepare the bed on which the
corpse will rest. A man may be attired in new white bawneens and *crios* and a
woman in her wedding dress, but it is becoming more common today for the body
to be clothed in a purchased brown habit. On the breast the hands are crossed and
rosary beads entwined in the fingers, and the corpse is covered up to the chest
with a white sheet which later is used to wrap it up in the coffin. The manufacture [322]
of the coffin usually is assigned to one of the canoe and furniture makers, who [463]
assembles it crudely with unpainted boards and delivers it the night of the wake
or the following morning.

764
The wake now is a solemn occasion in most of Ireland, and is attended for
the purpose of praying for the soul of the dead and sympathizing with the relatives 198
of the deceased. But until recently it was a gay affair, merrier than a wedding,

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male but sometimes female. Also, the former occupied a higher prestige position than the latter, but there was not the clear-cut distinction between genres appropriate to each type of narrator as elsewhere in Ireland; the *seanchaí* sometimes related the exploits of Finn and the *scéalaí* the pranks of the red man. The two surviving storytellers in 1960 were both old men, but the *seanchaí* died in 1963 and the *scéalaí* two years later. Both had been prolific contributors to Irish Folklore Commission collectors and Continental folklorists.

All of the above kinds of folklore expression, with the exception of folktales, were regarded as true by island folk in the past. The myths either coexisted or were reinterpreted with Biblical stories, and the legends were synchronized with events of ancient world history dating from just before the Flood to the eighth century. The Inis Beag *scéalaí* sometimes was derided by school children for still believing his narratives to be true, as was the *seanchaí* for claiming that the supernatural happenings described in his tales actually were experienced by islanders in the past century. Both narrators for many years had been visited only by folklorists and tourists wishing to hear them relate their repertoires of stories, for the only form of storytelling which has been perpetuated is the occasional gathering of men in a home or pub to exchange anecdotes, mostly related to fishing. I was told that in his prime the *scéalaí* could have recited narratives nightly for "at least a month" without ever repeating a story, had he ever been called on to do so. That the memory of the esteemed narrator is prodigious is revealed in the complete collection of all the material recorded from a single *scéalaí* of Co. Kerry, reported by Delargy, which included 396 pages of text: 186 tales, a few songs and song fragments, and various smaller items of prose and verse. These had been obtained from 27 different sources by the narrator, all of whom save one were neighbors (Delargy 1945:11).

Most liked by the folk were the prose narratives related by the *scéalaí* and tales of recent and contemporary historical events in the region, stories of the supernatural in Inis Beag, and personal experiences told by the *seanchaí*. Few of the stories dealt with historical occurrences in Ireland between the coming of Christianity and the beginning of the nineteenth century, and none of them concerned personages or happenings associated with the church. At my request, the *seanchaí* read three books of Irish folklore that I had brought with me—J. J. Campbell's *Legends of Ireland*, Jeremiah Curtin's *Irish Folk-Tales*, and Eileen O'Faolain's *Irish Sagas and Folk-Tales*—and declared that he had heard all of the stories therein as a youth from his father and other island storytellers. However, the versions in the books often were "incorrect," he claimed, and he delighted in "correcting" them; of course, there are many variants of each tale (as many as 527—Aarne-Thompson type 300 in the archives of the Irish Folklore Commission), and he regarded the Inis Beag stories as the legitimate variants. Most of the local and Irish tales share types (plots) and motifs (incidents, characters, and objects) with those of European and other societies brought about by millennia of diffusion, but the Irish have refashioned these elements in their own corpus according to their culture and personality dispositions.

I will not discuss the various prose narratives told by the *scéalaí* of Inis Beag; the greater number of them can be obtained from Campbell or O'Faolain or Sean O'Sullivan's recent Folktales of Ireland.

17: Messenger E-4,5 (1958-1966)1971 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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human relationships are few. There is, in fact, little difference in the style of life between the most and the least prosperous of the islanders. The web of kinship rather than the possession of status attributes, for the most part, determines who will interact with whom and in what manner. Land and money are the principal symbols, with formal education and influential relatives (particularly priests, nuns, and teachers), on the mainland and abroad, becoming more important. Two generations ago, strength, courage, economic skills, and musical and storytelling abilities were highly regarded as well, but acculturation has lessened their significance.

Although there are fifty-nine nuclear families, only thirteen surnames exist today. There is much inbreeding, as might be expected, and the church carefully checks the genealogies of prospective spouses to ascertain their degree of consanguinity. Courtship is almost nonexistent, and most marriages are arranged with little concern for the desires of the young people involved. Late marriage and celibacy are as prevalent in Inis Beag as elsewhere in Ireland. The average marriage age for men is thirty-six and for women twenty-five, and 29 percent of those persons eligible for marriage are single.[3] The functions of the family are mainly economic and reproductive, and conjugal love is extremely rare. A sharp dichotomy exists between the sexes; both before and after marriage men interact mostly with men and women with women. The average family has seven offspring, and many women are unhappy about being forced by the unauthorized decree of local priests to produce as many children as possible. They feel that the constant bearing and rearing of offspring increase their work, restrict their freedom, and perpetuate the poverty of their families. Jealousy of the greater freedom of men is commonly expressed by women who have many young children. Mothers bestow a considerable amount of attention and affection on their offspring, especially on their sons. However, tensions between fathers and sons which develop in childhood often flare into scarcely repressed hostility

[3] Twenty-nine percent of those islanders of marriageable age are single. This rises to a high of 37 percent among first and second generation Inis Beag emigrants, indicating the actions of more than just economic causes. Irish scholars, for obvious reasons, tend to stress economic and other (climate, race, English oppression, the famine, loss of the Irish tongue, etc.) monistic causes in their analyses of culture and personality phenomena. Inadequate statistics for second and third generation migrants from Inis Beag suggest that the celibacy rate lowers markedly only when descendants of immigrants dissociate themselves from Irish ethnic communities and Irish-American priests. Ethnographic research is sorely needed among Irish of several generations in the countries to which they have migrated to probe this and other phenomena.